

CITY DATA

How does the health of infants and children in America's cities compare to that of children nationwide? This section presents data on infant mortality, low birth weight, and health care for children and pregnant women who reside in the nation's cities with populations over 100,000 residents.

As the following data indicate, the health status of children living in large U.S. cities is generally inferior to that of children in the nation as a whole. In 2002, the percentage of infants born at low birth weight was 9 percent higher for residents of U.S. cities compared to the national average (8.5 percent versus 7.8 percent). While the infant mortality rate has decreased in both cities and the nation as a whole, a difference in rates remains. Higher rates of low birth weight contributed to the city infant mortality rate of 7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2001; the national rate for 2001 was 6.9 per 1,000. The percentage of pregnant women receiving first trimester prenatal care is lower in cities (80.8 percent) than it is nationwide (83.7 percent).



BIRTHWEIGHT

Low Birth Weight

Disorders related to short gestation and low birth weight are the second leading cause of neonatal mortality in the United States.¹ In 2002, 103,932 babies (8.5 percent) born to residents of U.S. cities with populations over 100,000 were of low birth weight (weighing less than 2,500 grams, or 5.5 pounds). The 2002 percentage of urban infants born at low birth weight was 9 percent higher than the national rate of 7.8 percent.

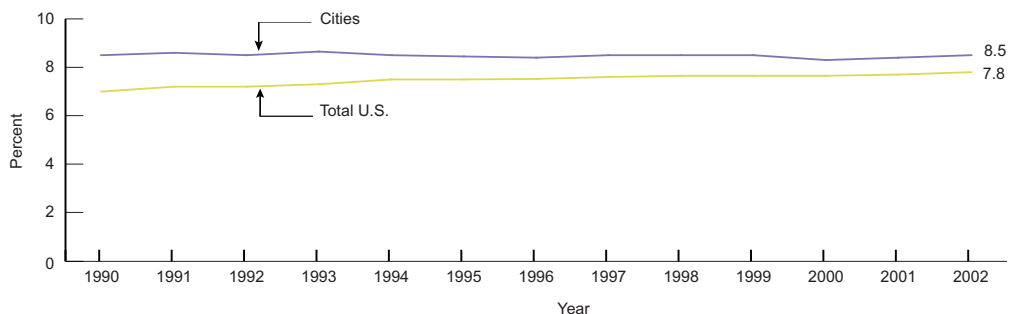
Very Low Birth Weight

Infants born at very low birth weight (less than 1,500 grams, or 3 pounds and 4 ounces) are at highest risk for poor health outcomes. In 2002, 1.7 percent of live births in cities with populations over 100,000 were of very low birth weight. This rate exceeded the national very low birth weight rate by 13 percent.

¹ The leading cause of neonatal mortality is congenital anomalies.

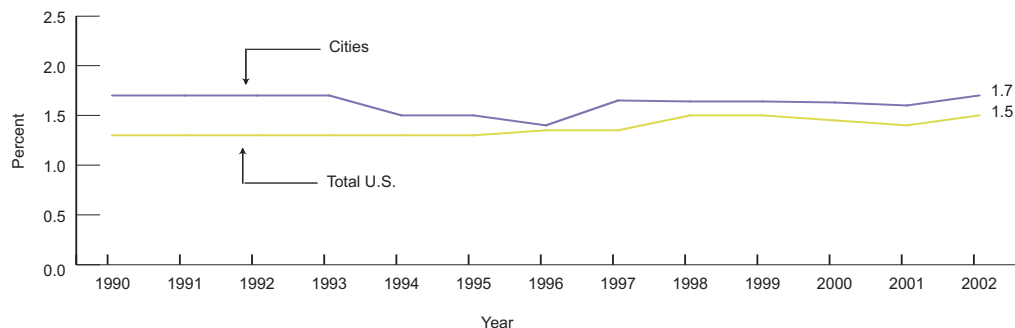
Infants Born at Low Birth Weight in U.S. Cities with Populations Over 100,000: 1990-2002

Source (VI.1): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System



Infants Born at Very Low Birth Weight in U.S. Cities with Populations Over 100,000: 1990-2002

Source (VI.1): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System

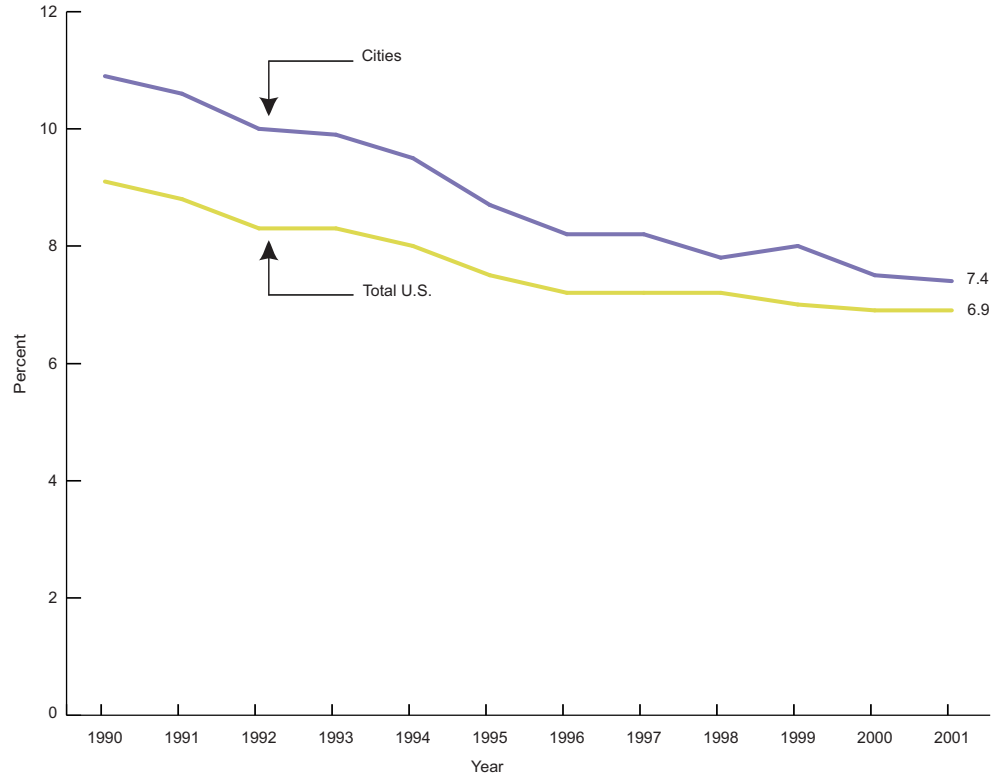


INFANT MORTALITY

In 2001, 9,139 infants born to residents of U.S. cities with populations over 100,000 died in the first year of life. The city infant mortality rate was 7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births, which was higher than the rate of 6.9 for the nation as a whole. Although the infant mortality rate in cities has routinely been higher than the rate nationwide, it has steadily declined over the past decade. Between 1990 and 2000, infant mortality in cities declined by roughly one-third; the decline nationwide in the same period was 25 percent.

Infant Mortality Rates in U.S. Cities with Populations Over 100,000: 1990-2001

Source (VI.1): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System



PRENATAL CARE

Early Prenatal Care

Women living in U.S. cities with a population of over 100,000 are less likely to begin prenatal care in the first three months of pregnancy than women nationwide. The gap in early entry into prenatal care between urban women and the nation as a whole has narrowed since 1991.

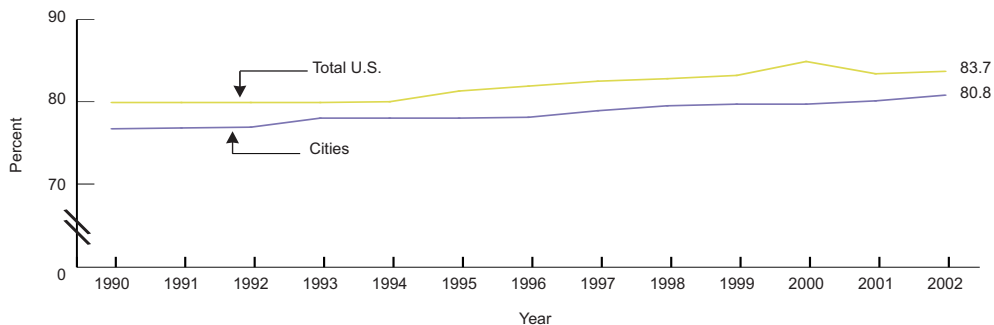
In 2002, 80.8 percent of pregnant women living in U.S. cities began prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy, compared to 83.7 percent nationwide. The percentage of women receiving prenatal care has increased steadily in the past decade at both the city and nationwide levels. The Healthy People 2010 objective is for 90 percent of pregnant women to begin prenatal care in the first trimester.

Late or No Prenatal Care

In 2002, 4.6 percent of pregnant women living in U.S. cities with a population over 100,000 either began prenatal care in the 3rd trimester or received no prenatal care. The percentage of women receiving late or no prenatal care is 28 percent higher among women living in cities than among the overall U.S. population.

Pregnant Women Receiving First Trimester Prenatal Care in U.S. Cities with Populations Over 100,000: 1990-2002

Source (VI.1): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System



Pregnant Women Receiving Late or No Prenatal Care in U.S. Cities with Populations Over 100,000: 1990-2002

Source (VI.1): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System

